

# Juvenile Justice Report

The official newsletter of the New York City Department of Juvenile Justice

Michael R. Bloomberg, Mayor

Fall 2005

Neil Hernandez, Commissioner



Joel Copperman, Executive Director of the Center for Alternative Sentencing and Employment Services (CASES), delivers keynote address at DJJ's Fall 2005 graduation ceremony.

## DJJ Holds Fall Graduation Ceremony at Historic Surrogate's Courthouse

**Fifty new Juvenile Counselors, Special Officers and Houseparents complete training, join agency ranks**

On Friday, October 14<sup>th</sup>, The NYC Department of Juvenile Justice held its Fall 2005 Graduation Ceremony for Juvenile Counselors, Special Officers and Houseparents at the historic Surrogate's Courthouse in Manhattan. The event marked the successful completion of a three week training program for the new employees, who have since been deployed throughout the agency's facilities.

The evening event attracted more than 125 agency employees, colleagues, family members, friends and special guests, and featured a dynamic program, including a keynote address by Joel Copperman, Executive Director of the Center for Alternative Sentencing and Employment Services (CASES). Imam Umar Abdul-Jalil of the NYC Department of Correction delivered the invocation and Officer Al Salamo, also from the Department of Correction, performed 'The National Anthem.'

DJJ Director of Training Stanley Helfeld announced the names of each new employee while Deputy Commissioner Thomas Tsotsoros and Assistant Commissioner Stephanie Prussack presented the graduates with personalized graduation plaques.

The Fall graduation ceremony marks the ongoing expansion of DJJ's frontline operations staff that was made possible in Mayor Michael R. Bloomberg's Executive Budget for Fiscal Year 2006.

*Continued on page 2*

## Mayor Michael Bloomberg Announces Launch of Out-of-School Time Initiative

Mayor Michael R. Bloomberg and DYCD Commissioner Jeanne B. Mullgrav announced the launch of the City's new



Out-of-School Time (OST) initiative, a three-year, \$200 million initiative that will provide a mix of academic, recreational and cultural activities for young people after school, during holidays and in the summer. The new OST system consists of over 550 programs free of cost, in every neighborhood across the City. The programs will be operated by 200 community-based organizations.

"Our new Out-of-School Time system will better serve children and working parents by engaging youth at precisely the times of the day when they are likely to be home alone or are most

*Continued on page 4*

## Carlos A. Serrano Joins DJJ as Deputy Commissioner

Carlos A. Serrano joined the agency's management team in September as its newest Deputy Commissioner for Administration.



Deputy Commissioner Serrano brings to the agency a distinguished 17-year track record of exemplary service to the City of New York. His extensive experience in financial management that includes 15 years with the Mayor's Office of Management and Budget will prove valuable in managing the agency's complex administrative needs.

*Continued on page 2*

## Fall Graduation –

*Continued from page 1*

Since April 2005, nearly 200 additional staff members have joined the agency's ranks. The addition of these critical positions will help fulfill DJJ's important mission and ensure the best possible custody and care for agency residents.

## Deputy Commissioner –

*Continued from page 1*

As Assistant Director of the Mayor's Office of Management and Budget, Mr. Serrano was responsible for allocating resources and formulating policy recommendations for criminal justice agencies, including DJJ. This included planning, implementing and monitoring 22 agency budgets totaling \$3.6 billion in operating expenses, \$2.6 billion in capital budgets and a half a billion dollars in revenue.



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New York City  
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*DJJ's William Soto receives Distinguished Service Award from Mayor's Office of Veterans' Affairs Executive Director Clarice Joynes*

Deputy Commissioner Serrano understands the service needs of youth in custody and was extensively involved in enhancing medical and mental health services and expanding the Department's non-secure detention portfolio. His responsibilities at DJJ cover a wide range of administrative services critical to supporting the operations of the agency. These areas include Human Resources, Information Technology, Budget, Contract Management, Procurement, and Training.

His unique perspective has enabled him to see the agency through different administrations and understand how the agency has changed over time. One observation he quickly points out is that, over the years, DJJ staff have always demonstrated a passion for their work and have continually strived to do their best, regardless of the challenge or obstacle.

Serrano is committed to financial integrity and to improving the systems and processes of how the agency's budget is spent and he sees his role as being part of the solution, no matter what the project or challenge. Among his goals is a desire to promote recognition of the agency as one whose staff is reasonable, responsible and dedicated, as well as helping to foster a collaborative environment focused on customer service.

## DJJ Employees Receive 2005 City Technology Awards

On Tuesday, November 1<sup>st</sup>, the Department of Information Technology and Telecommunications (DOITT) hosted its annual NYC Excellence in Technology Awards at the Brooklyn Marriott. DJJ's Tammy Jones and Alexandra Gorelik were each recognized with an Excellence in IT Service and Support Award.

The annual citywide Excellence in Technology Awards Program was established to salute the City's professionals and managers in the use and innovations associated with information technology.

DJJ Chief Information Officer Melvin Hyatte said, "Tammy's talent and personality make her a critical component of DJJ's IT team. This was an excellent choice by the selection committee."

Maria Guccione, Director of Strategic Planning and Policy, said, "This well deserved honor recognizes Alexandra's outstanding skills and ongoing commitment to DJJ."

DJJ Commissioner Neil Hernandez, First Deputy Commissioner Judy Pincus and DJJ CIO Melvin Hyatte attended the event in support of the agency's award recipients.



*DJJ First Deputy Commissioner Judy Pincus with 2005 Excellence in Technology Award recipients Tammy Jones and Alexandra Gorelik*

## DJJ Recognizes 16 for Title Promotion to Supervisory Juvenile Counselor

In September, DJJ promoted 16 existing employees from Juvenile Counselor (JC) to Associate Juvenile Counselor (AJC I) positions.

The new titles carry added responsibilities and duties, including supervision of Juvenile Counselors, oversight of attendance, timely reporting of incidents to MCCU, among others.

Those promoted included: Adeola Aladeniyi, Derrick Baker, Bernard Carbon, Lesley Estrella, Averill Grandsoult, Leon Harris, Anthony Hilliard, Kim Johnson, Sammie Kizer, Rhonda Moore, Tamimou Ouro-Agourda, Angel Pastrana, Darek Robinson, Kim Taylor, Helen Torres, and Valerie West.

The employees were recognized during a breakfast ceremony held at the agency's Central Office. Each individual promoted also received an individually engraved plaque with their new title.

Crossroads Executive Director Dennis Anyata served as the keynote speaker of the event which was attended by nearly 100 employees, family members, colleagues and friends.

Deputy Commissioner Tsotsoros and Assistant Commissioner Pufolkes provided commencement remarks and First Deputy Commissioner Pincus delivered closing remarks for the ceremony.

Crossroads Executive Director and keynote speaker Dennis Anyata said, "As a former AJC, I know from experience that this is an important position that carries great responsibility and the opportunity to make a difference in the life of a young person."

## 'Right to Know' Training Promotes Awareness About Workplace Hazards

DJJ held its first round of 'Right to Know' (RTK) training for all employees in June. RTK training alerts employees to the presence of hazards each may be exposed to in the workplace and is required annually under federal law.

Right to Know training explores the many layers of law at the federal, state and City level that have been put in place to protect government employees from hazards in the workplace, some of which may be obvious and others which are not. DJJ's training seminars encompass applicable laws, plus other relevant topics such as blood borne pathogens, ergonomics, and chemical hazards.

The first seminars were held at all facilities on June 16<sup>th</sup> and 17<sup>th</sup>. Additional sessions were scheduled for those unable to attend during the original dates.

If you are an existing or new agency employee who has not yet received this training for 2005, you must, by law, complete it before the end of the year. Contact Roslyn White by telephone at 212-925-7779 or by e-mail at [rwhite@djj.nyc.gov](mailto:rwhite@djj.nyc.gov) to learn about future RTK seminars.



*Deputy Commissioner Thomas Tsotsoros presents new Juvenile Counselor Cynthia Medrano with plaque at DJJ's Fall 2005 Graduation Ceremony at the historic Surrogate's Courthouse.*

### Commissioner's Message

*By Neil Hernandez*



Since I last wrote to you in the Spring newsletter, the Department has continued to fill new direct childcare staff positions and has commenced new programming for detained youth.

On Monday, October 31<sup>st</sup>, the Department commenced training for the sixth training class of 29 juvenile counselors, which represents near completion of the hiring of all 200 new staff. Getting to this point was no small task. During the past several months, the Department processed 2,000 applicants and conducted 1,000 interviews, and through a similar process, non-secure detention had 10 new house-parents added to its ranks.

This arduous, but worthwhile process speaks volumes of the level of commitment and quality on the part of those who were finally selected and who have trained to work with detained youth. To all of you, I again thank you for your strong interest in our young people and I wish you the best for a long and rewarding career with the Department.

This year, the Department invested over \$750,000 for additional services to benefit youth in detention, ranging from literacy tutorials for those young people needing additional assistance with reading to programming geared towards girls. Services will also include conflict resolution and peer mediation training for staff and youth. Through these services, the Department seeks to positively impact our young people's time in and beyond detention.

With the holiday season upon us, it is a time to be particularly mindful of youth who will experience a range of emotions while away from their families. As always, we should remain sensitive to their needs and ensure that we counsel them toward positive life choices. As a DJJ family, we will have an opportunity to celebrate together at our annual holiday party, and I hope you are able to spend time with family and friends in the weeks to come.

## Summer of Aspiration

### SEEDS Leadership Program Promotes Youth Introspection & Interaction

SEEDS conducted an intensive four-part summer leadership program for youth, designed to reduce incidents and assist residents with working out their problems while building self-esteem. Case managers, staff, and facility directors from DJJ and contracted non-secure facilities conducted workshops.

Section 1 workshop topics included youth violence, positive youth relationships, conflict resolution, self-esteem, values and beliefs, decision-making, stress management, and anger management.

Section 2 focused on teambuilding activities. Each week, 70 residents participated in SEEDS-conducted exercises designed to promote team spirit and strengthening themselves as one unit through several sports programs (flag football, basketball, softball for male residents and volleyball, double dutch, and softball for female residents) where fair play, sportsmanship, and positive reinforcement was the focus, not the resulting scores. Each facility appointed a staff member and resident who actively participated in coaching its team.



NSD residents sport ASPIRE-wear during SEEDS summer leadership program for youth.

Section 3 focused on creation of an ASPIRE leadership team made up of residents from SEEDS facilities who had received intensive training in leadership skills and styles, who were responsible for providing suggestions to improve the overall operations of residents in DJJ care.

The fourth and final component of the leadership program focused on educational and recreational field trips. Excursions were scheduled, among other destinations, to the New York Hall of Science and the New York Aquarium. Nearly 90 residents per week participated in SEEDS trips and teambuilding activities.

An end of summer ceremony enabled residents to display what they had learned. Each resident received a certificate of participation, and first and second place winners of each teambuilding activity received trophies.

Staff working with the summer program included facility directors, case managers and discharge planners from Bridges, plus SEEDS line staff.

### **Mayor Bloomberg –**

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vulnerable," said Mayor Bloomberg.

The OST system is a model of interagency coordination as it reaches every corner of the City and consolidates services from a multitude of City agencies

**For more information about DJJ and related topics, visit us online:**

**[nyc.gov/html/djj](http://nyc.gov/html/djj)**

System-wide changes have brought OST programs to neighborhoods and communities that traditionally have been underserved. High-need areas were pinpointed by analyzing five demographic variables: youth population; youth poverty rate; rate of youth ages 16-19 years who are not in school, not high school graduates, and not in the labor force; number of English Language Learner students in public schools; and the number of single parent families with related children under 18. In total, there will be 118 OST programs in the Bronx, 194 in Brooklyn, 118 in Manhattan, 105 in Queens and 23 in Staten Island.

Building on his commitment to improving the education system, Mayor Bloomberg began the OST reform initiative in the fall of 2003, inviting 200 community leaders and representatives from City Agencies, community organizations, parent groups and foundations to attend an OST summit.

OST will serve more than 47,000 elementary, middle and high school students this school year.

Families can find OST and other youth programs in their neighborhood, including program hours, ages served and types of activities either online at [www.nyc.gov/dycd](http://www.nyc.gov/dycd) or by dialing the City's 311 information line.



New JC Edward Gamble, Teamsters Secretary-Treasurer Gregory Floyd and Commissioner Neil Hernandez at NYU ceremony.